

Advaita Means Not Two – Osho

Osho,

The method that you have shown us for realizing the truth or the universal self is of negating everything and knowing oneself. Is the opposite of it not also possible: that we try to see the universal self in all, that we feel it in the whole?

It will be helpful to understand this.

One who cannot realize godliness within himself can never realize it in all. One who has not yet recognized godliness within himself can never recognize it in others. The self means that which is nearest to you; then anyone who is at a little distance from you will have to be considered as being farther away. And if you cannot see godliness in yourself, which is nearest you, you cannot possibly see it in those far from you. First you will have to know godliness in yourself; first the knower will have to know the divine – that is the nearest door.

But remember, it is very interesting that the individual who enters his self suddenly finds the entrance to all. The door to one's self is the door to all. No sooner does a man enter his self than he finds he has entered all, because although we are outwardly different, inwardly we are not.

Outwardly, all leaves are different from each other. But if a person could penetrate just one leaf, he would reach to the source of the tree where all the leaves are in unison. Seen individually, each leaf is different – but once you have known a leaf in its interiority, you will have reached to the source from which all leaves emanate and into which all leaves dissolve. One who enters himself simultaneously enters all.

The distinction between “I” and “you” remains only so long as we have not entered within ourselves. The day we enter our I, the I disappears and so does the you – what remains then is all.

Actually, “all” does not mean the sum of I and you. “All” means where I and you have both disappeared, and what subsequently remains is all. If “I” has not yet dissolved, then one can certainly add I's and you's, but the sum will not equal truth. Even if one adds all the leaves, a tree does not come into being – even though it has had all the leaves added to it. A tree is more than the sum of all the leaves. In fact, it has nothing to do with addition; it is erroneous to add. Adding one leaf to another, we assume each one is separate. A tree is not made of separate leaves at all.

So, as soon as we enter the I, it ceases to exist. The first thing that disappears when we enter within is the sense of being a separate entity. And when that I-ness disappears, you-ness and the other-ness both disappear. Then what remains is all.

It's not even right to call it “all,” because “all” also has the connotation of the same old I. Hence those who know would not even call it “all”; they would ask, “The sum of what? What are we adding?” Furthermore, they would declare that only one remains. Although they would perhaps even hesitate to say that, because the assertion of one gives the impression that there are two – it gives the idea that alone one has no meaning without the corresponding notion of two. One exists only in the context of two. Therefore, those who have a deeper understanding do not even say that one remains; they say *advaita*, nonduality, remains.

Now this is very interesting. These people say, “Two are not left.” They are not saying, “One remains,” they are saying “Two are not left.” *Advaita* means there are not two.

One might ask, “Why do you talk in such roundabout ways? Simply say there is only one!” The danger in saying “one” is that it gives rise to the idea of two. And when we say there are not two, it follows that there are not three either; it implies that there is neither one, nor many, nor all. Actually, this division resulted from the perception based on the existence of “I.” So with the cessation of I, that which is whole, the indivisible, remains.

But to realize this, can we do what our friend is suggesting – can we not visualize godliness in everyone? To do so would be nothing more than fantasizing, and fantasizing is not the same as realizing the truth.

Long ago some people brought a holy man to me. They told me this man saw godliness everywhere, that for the last thirty years he had been seeing godliness in everything – in flowers, plants, rocks, in everything. I asked the man if he had been seeing godliness in everything through practice because if that were so then his visions were false. He couldn't follow me. I asked him again, "Did you ever fantasize about or desire to see godliness in everything?" He replied, "Yes indeed. Thirty years ago I started this spiritual discipline in which I would attempt to see godliness in rocks, plants, mountains, in everything. And I began to see godliness everywhere." I asked him to stay with me for three days and, during that period, try not to see godliness everywhere.

He agreed. But the very next day he told me, "You have done me great harm. Only twelve hours have passed since I gave up my usual practice and I have already begun to see a rock as a rock and a mountain as a mountain. You have snatched my godliness away from me! What sort of a person are you?"

I said, "If godliness can be lost by not practicing for just twelve hours, then what you saw was not godliness – it was merely a consequence of your regular practice." It is similar to when a person repeats something incessantly and creates an illusion. No, godliness has not to be seen in a rock; rather, one needs to reach a state in which there is nothing left to be seen in a rock *except* godliness. These are two different things.

Through your efforts to see it there, you will begin to see godliness in a rock, but that godliness will be no more than a mental projection. That will be a godliness superimposed by you on to the rock; it will be the work of your imagination. That godliness will be purely your creation; a complete figment of your imagination. Such godliness is nothing more than your dream – a dream which you have consolidated by reinforcing it again and again. There is no problem seeing godliness like this, but it is living in an illusion, it is not entering truth.

One day, of course, it happens that the individual himself disappears and, consequently, he sees nothing but godliness. Then one doesn't feel that godliness is in the rock; then the feeling is, "Where is the rock? Only godliness is!" Do you follow the distinction I am making? Then one doesn't feel that godliness exists in the plant or that it exists in the rock; that the plant exists and, in the plant, so does godliness – no, nothing of the kind. What one comes to feel is, "Where is the plant? Where is the rock? Where is the mountain?" ...because all around, whatever is seen, whatever exists is only godliness. Then seeing godliness does not depend upon your exercise, it depends upon your experience.

The greatest danger in the realm of spiritual practice is the danger of imagination. We can fantasize truths which must otherwise become our own experience. There is a difference between experiencing and fantasizing. A person who has been hungry the whole day eats at night in his dream and feels greatly satisfied. Perhaps he does not find as much joy in eating when he is awake as he does when he is dreaming – in the dream he can eat any dish he wants. Nevertheless, his stomach still remains empty in the morning, and the food he has consumed in his dream gives him no nourishment. If a man decides to stay alive on the food he eats in dreams, then he is sure to die soon. No matter how satisfying the food eaten in the dream may be, in reality it is not food. It can neither become part of your blood, nor your flesh, nor your bones or marrow. A dream can only cause deception.

Not only are meals made of dreams, godliness is also made of dreams. And so is *moksha*, liberation, made of dreams. There is a silence made of dreams, and there are truths made of dreams. The greatest capacity of the human mind is the capacity to deceive itself. However, by falling into this kind of deception, no one can attain bliss and liberation.

So I am not asking you to start seeing godliness in everything. I am only asking you to start looking within and seeing what is there. When, in order to see what is there, you begin to look inside, the first person to disappear will be you – you will cease to exist inside. You will find for the first time that your I was an illusion, and that it has disappeared, vanished. As soon as you take a look inside, first the

I, the ego, goes. In fact, the sense that “I am” only persists until we have looked inside ourselves. And the reason we don’t look inside is perhaps because of the fear that, if we did, we might be lost.

You may have seen a man holding a burning torch and swinging it round and round until it forms a circle of fire. In reality there is no such circle, it is just that when the torch is swinging round with great speed, it gives the appearance of a circle from a distance. If you see it close up, you will find that it is just a fast-moving torch, that the circle of fire is false. Similarly, if we go within and look carefully, we will find that the I is absolutely false. Just as the fast-moving torch gives the illusion of a circle of fire, the fast-moving consciousness gives the illusion of I. This is a scientific truth and it needs to be understood.

You may not have noticed, but all life’s illusions are caused by things revolving at great speed. The wall looks very solid; the rock under your feet feels clearly solid, but according to scientists there is nothing like a solid rock. It is now a well-known fact that the closer scientists observed matter, the more it disappeared. As long as the scientist was distant from matter, he believed in it. Mostly it was the scientist who used to declare that matter alone is truth, but now that very scientist is saying there is nothing like matter. Scientists say that the fast movement of particles of electricity, the electrons, creates the illusion of density. Density, as such, exists nowhere.

For example, when an electric fan moves with speed, we cannot see the three moving blades; one cannot actually count how many there are. If it moves even faster, it will appear as if a piece of circular metal is moving. It can be moved so fast that even if you sat on top of it, you wouldn’t feel the gap between the blades; you would feel as if you were sitting on top of solid metal.

The particles in matter are moving with similar speed – and the particles are not matter, they are fast-moving electric energy. Matter appears dense because of fast-moving particles of electricity. The whole of matter is a product of fast-moving energy – even though it appears to exist, it is actually nonexistent. Similarly, the energy of consciousness is moving so fast that, because of it, the illusion of I is created.

There are two kinds of illusions in this world: one, the illusion of matter; second, the illusion of I, the ego. Both are basically false, but only by coming closer to them does one become aware they don’t exist. As science draws closer to matter, matter disappears; as religion draws nearer I the I disappears. Religion has discovered that the I is nonexistent, and science has discovered that matter is nonexistent. The closer we come, the more we become disillusioned.

That’s why I say: go within; look closely – is there any I inside? I am not asking you to believe that you are not the I. If you do, it will turn into a false belief. If you take my word for it and think, “I am not; the ego is false. I am *atman*, I am *brahman*; the ego is false,” you will throw yourself into confusion. If this merely becomes a repetitive thing, then you will only be repeating the false. I am not asking you for this sort of repetition. I am saying: go within, look, recognize who you are. One who looks within and recognizes himself discovers that “I am not.” Then who is within? If I am not, then someone else must be there. Just because “I am not,” doesn’t mean no one is there, because even to recognize the illusion, *someone* has to be there.

If I am not, then who is there? The experience of what remains after the disappearance of I is the experience of godliness. The experience becomes at once expansive – dropping I, “you” also drops, “he” also drops, and only an ocean of consciousness remains. In that state you will see that only godliness is. Then it may seem erroneous to say that godliness is, because that is a repetition.

It is a repetition to say, “godliness is” because godliness is the other name of “that which is.” Is-ness is godliness – hence to say “godliness is” is a tautology; it isn’t correct. What does it mean to say, “godliness is”? We identify something as “is” which can also become “is not.” We say, “the table is,” because it is quite possible the table may not exist tomorrow, or that the table did not exist yesterday. Something that did not exist before may become nonexistent again; then what is the sense in saying “it is”? Godliness is not something that did not exist before, nor is it possible that it will never be again; therefore, to say “godliness is” is meaningless. It is. In fact, another name for godliness is “that which is.” Godliness means existence.

In my view, if we impose our God on “that which is,” we are pushing ourselves into falsehood and deception. And remember, the Gods we have created are made differently; each has his respective trademark. A Hindu has made his own God, a Mohammedan has his own. The Christian, the Jaina, the Buddhist – each has his own God. All have coined their own respective words; all have created their own respective Gods. A whole great God-manufacturing industry abounds! In their respective homes people manufacture their God; they produce their own God. It is a home industry. And then these God-manufacturers fight among themselves in the marketplace the same way the people who manufacture goods and commodities do. Everyone’s God is different from the other’s.

Actually, as long as “I am,” whatsoever I create will be different from yours. As long as “I am,” my religion, my God will be different from other people’s because they will be the creation of I, of the ego. Since we consider ourselves separate entities, whatever we create will have a separate character. If, to create religion, the appropriate freedom could be granted, there would be as many religions in the world as there are people – not less than that. It is because of the lack of the right kind of freedom that there are so few religions in the world.

A Hindu father takes certain care to make his son a Hindu before he becomes independent. A Mohammedan father makes his son a Mohammedan before he becomes intelligent, because once intelligence is attained, a person won’t want to become either a Hindu or a Mohammedan. And so there is the need to fill a child with all these stupidities before he achieves intelligence.

All parents are anxious to teach their children religion right from childhood, because once a child grows up he will start to think and to cause trouble. He will raise all sorts of questions – and not finding any satisfactory answers, will do things difficult for the parents to face. This is why parents are keen to teach their children religion right from infancy – when the child is unaware of many things, when he is vulnerable to learning any kind of stupidity. This is how people become Mohammedans, Hindus, Jainas, Buddhists, Christians – whatsoever you teach them to become.

And so, those we call religious people are often found to be unintelligent. They lack intelligence, because what we call religion is something which has poisoned us before intelligence could arise in us – and even afterward it continues its inner hold. No wonder Hindus and Mohammedans fight with each other in the name of God, in the name of their temples and their mosques.

Does God come in many varieties? Is the God Hindus worship of one kind, and the God the Mohammedans worship of another? Is that why Hindus feel their God is desecrated if an idol is destroyed? Or Mohammedans feel their God is dishonored if a mosque is destroyed or burned?

Actually, God is “that which is.” It exists as much in a mosque as it does in a temple. It exists as much in a slaughterhouse as it does in a place of worship. It exists as much in a tavern as it does in a mosque. It is as present in a thief as in a holy man – not one iota less; that can never be. Who else is dwelling in a thief if not the divine? It is as present in Rama as in Ravana – it is not one iota less in Ravana. It exists as much within a Hindu as it does within a Mohammedan.

But the problem is: if we come to believe that the same divinity exists in everyone, our God-manufacturing industry will suffer heavily. So in order to prevent this from happening, we keep on imposing our respective Gods. If a Hindu looks at a flower he will project his own God on it, see his God in it, whereas a Mohammedan will project, visualize his God. They can even pick a fight over this, although perhaps such a Hindu-Mohammedan conflict is a little far-fetched.

Their establishments are at a little distance from each other – but there are even quarrels between the closely related “divinity shops.” For example, there is quite a distance between Kashi and Mecca, but there is not much distance in Kashi between the temples of Rama and Krishna. And yet the same degree of trouble can erupt between them.

I have heard about a great saint...I am calling him great because people used to call him great, and I am calling him a saint only because people used to call him a saint.

He was a devotee of Rama. Once he was taken to the temple of Krishna. When he saw the idol of Krishna holding a flute in his hands, he refused to bow down to the image. Standing before the image, he said, "If you would take up the bow and arrow, only then could I bow down to you, for then you would be my Lord Rama." How strange! We place conditions on God also – how and in which manner or position he should present himself. We prescribe the setting; we make our requirements – only then are we prepared to worship.

It is so strange we determine what our God should be like. But that's how it has been all along. What we have been identifying as "God" is a product based on our own specifications. As long as this man-made God is standing in the way, we will not be able to know that godliness is not determined by us. We will never be able to know what determines us. And so we need to get rid of the man-made God if we wish to know the godliness which is. But that's tough; it's difficult even for the most kindhearted person. Even for someone we would otherwise consider a man of understanding it is hard to get rid of this man-made God. He too clings firmly to the basic foolishness as much as a stupid man does. A stupid man can be forgiven, but it is difficult to forgive a man of understanding.

Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan arrived in India and went around preaching Hindu-Mohammedan unity all over the country, but he himself is a staunch Mohammedan; about this, there is not the slightest doubt. It doesn't bother him that he prays in the mosque like a loyal Mohammedan, yet he is going about preaching Hindu-Mohammedan unity. Gandhi was a staunch Hindu, and he also used to preach Hindu-Mohammedan unity. As the guru, so is the disciple: the guru was a confirmed Hindu; the disciple is a confirmed Mohammedan. And so long as there are confirmed Hindus and confirmed Mohammedans in the world, how can such unity come about? They need to relax a little, only then unity is possible. These zealous Hindus and Mohammedans are at the root of all the trouble between the two religions, although the roots of these troubles are not really visible. Those who preach Hindu-Mohammedan unity do not have the vaguest idea how to bring it about.

As long as God is different to different people, as long as there are different places of worship for different people, as long as prayers are different and scriptures are different – Koran being father for some and Gita being mother for others – the vexing troubles between religions will never come to an end. We cling to the Koran and the Gita. We say, "Read the Koran and teach people to drop enmity and to become one." Or we say, "Read the Gita and teach people to drop enmity and to become one." We don't realize, however, that the very words of Koran and Gita are the root cause of all the trouble.

If a cow's tail gets cut off, a Hindu-Mohammedan riot will break out, and we will blame ruffians for causing the fight. And the funny thing is that no hoodlum has ever preached that the cow is our sacred mother. This is actually taught by our mahatmas, our holy men, who put the blame for creating riots on "hoodlums"... Because when the tail does get cut off, then for the mahatmas' purpose, it is not the tail of the cow, it is the tail of the holy mother! When they bring this to people's attention, the riots begin in which the hoodlums get involved and are later blamed for starting them.

So the people we call mahatmas are in fact at the root of all such troubles. Were they to step aside, the hoodlums would be harmless, they would have no power to fight. They get strength from the mahatmas. But the mahatmas remain so well hidden underground that we never ever realize they could be at the root of the problem.

What is the root of the problem, really? The root cause of all the trouble is your God – the God manufactured in your homes. Try to save yourselves from the Gods you create in your respective homes. You cannot manufacture God in your homes; the existence of such a God will be pure deception.

I am not asking you to project God. After all, in the name of God, what will you project? A devotee of Krishna will say he sees God hiding behind a bush holding a flute in his hand, while a devotee of Rama will see God holding a bow and arrow. Everyone will see God differently. This kind of seeing is nothing but projecting our desires and concepts. Godliness is not like this. We cannot find it by projecting our desires and our concepts – to find it we will have to disappear altogether. We will have to disappear – along with all our concepts and all our projections. Both things cannot go hand in hand. As long as you exist as an ego, the experience of godliness is absolutely impossible. You as an ego

will have to go; only then is it possible to experience it. I cannot enter the door of the divine as long as my I, my ego, exists.

I have heard a story about a man who renounced everything and reached the door of the divine. He had renounced wealth, wife, house, children, society, everything, and having renounced all, he approached the door of the divine. But the guard stopped him and said, “You cannot enter yet. First go and leave everything behind.”

“But I have left everything,” pleaded the man.

“You have obviously brought your ‘I’ along with you. We are not interested in the rest; we are only concerned with your ‘I’. We don’t care about whatever you say you have left behind, we are concerned with your ‘I’,” the guard explained. “Go, drop it, and then come back.”

The man said, “I have nothing. My bag is empty – it contains no money, no wife, no children. I possess nothing.”

“Your ‘I’ is still in the bag – go and drop it. These doors are closed to those who bring their ‘I’ along; for them the doors have always been closed,” said the guard.

But how do we drop the I? The I will never drop by our attempts to do so. How can “I” drop the very *I* itself? This is impossible. It will be like someone trying to lift himself up by his shoelaces. How do I drop the I? Even after dropping everything, I will still remain. At the most one might say, “I have dropped the ego,” and yet this shows he is still carrying his “I.” One becomes egoistic even about dropping the ego. Then what should a man do? It’s quite a difficult situation.

I say to you: there is nothing difficult about it – because I don’t ask you to drop anything. In fact, I don’t ask you to *do* anything. The I, the ego, becomes stronger because of all the doing. I am merely asking you to go within and look for the I. If you find it, then there is no way to drop it. If it always exists there, what is there left to be dropped? And if you don’t find it, then too, there is no way to drop it. How can you drop something which doesn’t exist?

So go within and see if the I is there or not. I am simply saying that one who looks inside himself begins to laugh uproariously, because he cannot find his I anywhere within himself. Then what does remain? What remains then is godliness. That which remains with the disappearance of the I – could *that* ever be separate from you? When the I itself ceases to exist, who is going to create the separation? It is the I alone which separates me from you and you from me.

There is the wall of a house. Under the illusion that it divides sky into two, the wall stands – although sky never becomes divided, sky is indivisible. No matter how thick a wall you erect, the sky inside the house and the sky outside are not two different things; they are one. No matter how tall you raise the wall, the sky inside and outside the house is never divided. The man living inside the house, however, feels that he has divided the sky into two – one sky inside his house and another outside it. But if the wall were to fall, how would the man differentiate the sky within the house from the sky without? How would he figure it out? Then, only sky would remain. In the same way, we have divided consciousness into fragments by raising the walls of I. When this wall of I falls, then it is not that I will begin to see godliness in *you*. No, then I won’t be seeing *you*, I’ll only be seeing godliness. Please understand this subtle distinction carefully.

It will be wrong to say I would begin to see godliness in you – I won’t be seeing you any more, I will only be seeing the divine. It’s not that I would see godliness in a tree – I would no longer see a tree, only the divine. When somebody says godliness exists in each and every atom he is absolutely wrong, because he is seeing both the atom and godliness. Both cannot be seen simultaneously. The truth of the matter is that each and every atom is godliness, not that godliness exists in each and every atom. It is not that godliness is sitting enclosed inside an atom – whatever is, is godliness.

Godliness is the name given out of love to “that which is.” “That which is” is truth – in love we call it godliness. But it makes no difference by which name we call it. I do not ask, therefore, that you begin

to see godliness in everyone, I am saying: start looking inside. As soon as you look within, you will disappear. And with your disappearance what you'll see is godliness.

-Osho

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